

**ENGLISH 2312**  
**American Literature I**  
MWF 12:00-12:50  
303 Irby Hall  
Course Number: 11088

Dr. Lori Leavell  
Office: 428 Irby Hall  
Office Hours: MWF 10-11:45 a.m.; TTH 9:30-11:00 a.m.; and by appointment  
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**COURSE OVERVIEW**

The *Undergraduate Bulletin* describes English 2312 as a “basic course requirement for majors and minors and, in series with American Literature II, a charting of the major forms and styles of American literature. The course traces the development of major figures in American Colonial and Provincial literature (such as Mather, Brockden Brown, Franklin) to leading figures of the American Renaissance (such as Hawthorne, Melville, Poe, Emerson, and Thoreau). Lecture, discussion, writing.”

Writers of literature emerging from within the United States during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, along with those both within and outside the U.S. who read this literature, worried about a number of issues regarding the future of the new nation and its literary production: Would this nation (and its literature) prove to be distinctive? Who would count as “American”? Who in a democratic society would produce and read literature? What would the quality, content, and form of its literature be? Though traditional literary histories of the United States have charted a movement toward consolidation and consensus regarding the emergence of a unique American literature, more recent considerations underscore the contingency, conflict, and uncertainty that marked literary expression and print culture throughout the nineteenth century. We will pay particular attention as we read (and lectures will fill in some of the historical gaps) to indications of the conflicts marking this period. In short, the course’s readings should enable us to think about the dissensus informing the development of U.S. literary traditions.

**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Not only will this course examine a body of literature that developed during this period, but also it will attend to conflict within and outside the country surrounding this development. It will provide instruction in the techniques and methods of literary studies—tools important to the study of all literature—as well as focus on the variety of purposes that literary writing and print culture have served in the United States. Three broad goals will guide our study:

- To become familiar with and adept at implementing the principles of literary analysis.
- To trace a history of writing in the United States up to the Civil War.
- To recognize some of the historical, political, and cultural forces relevant to literary production in the United States from the colonial period to the Civil War.

**TEXTS**

*The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, seventh edition, volumes A and B; electronic texts available on Blackboard—to be printed and brought to class.

**REQUIREMENTS**

*Three papers (each one 4-5 pages):* Before each paper is due, students will receive an assignment sheet, outlining prompts from which to choose along with specific requirements. On their due dates (September 23, November 4, and December 7), papers are due at the beginning of class. Late papers, which must be submitted in hard copy, are marked down half of a letter grade for each day they are late.

*Two exams:* Exams will be comprised of some combination of quotation identification, short answer, and brief essays. The mid-term exam can be made up only at my discretion and with the deduction of ten percentage points.

*Participation:* On Sundays and Tuesdays by 7 p.m. students will submit to Blackboard two questions provoked by the readings assigned for the following day's class. Late submissions will not be accepted. I will use these questions to inform the lecture and discussion. Submitting questions constitutes the minimal form of participation. Indeed, throughout the semester students should take an active role in sharing with the class their insights and concerns about the readings. Students are required to bring to class the texts to be discussed. While most texts can be found in the *Norton*, a few have been made available via Blackboard (indicated with "BB" on the day-by-day schedule) and must be printed and brought to class. Three absences (for whatever reason) will not alter one's grade; however, each subsequent absence will result in the deduction of five points from the fifty total participation points. Please be aware that seven absences will result in a grade of WF for the course.

**POINT DISTRIBUTION**

Exams: Two @ 75 points each	=	150
Papers: Three @ 50 points each	=	150
Participation: Twenty-five sets of questions @ 2 points each	=	50
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Total Points	=	350

Points will be converted to percentages to yield final grades according to the following scale:

90% - 100%	=	A
80% - 89%	=	B
70% - 79%	=	C
60% - 69%	=	D
Below 60%	=	F

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction that the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

If you have questions about the university's academic policies, guidelines regarding sexual harassment, or any other matters, please consult the relevant sections of the UCA Student Handbook. UCA adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need an accommodation under this Act due to a disability, contact the UCA Office of Disability Services at 450-3135.

**DAY-BY-DAY SCHEDULE**

- 8/26 --Introduction to the course  
 --Constructing literary histories

**Beginnings to 1700**

\*The following *Norton* texts to be found in Volume A.

Week One

- 8/29 Iroquois and Pima Creation Stories (17-31)
- 8/31 Jonathan Edwards, "Personal Narrative" (386-96) and "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" (425-37)  
 John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (147-57)
- 9/2 Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (235-67)

**American Literature, 1700-1820**Week Two

- 9/5 Labor Day
- 9/7 Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography* (472-534)
- 9/9 Franklin, *The Autobiography* (534-587)

Week Three

- 9/12 J. Hector St. John De Crèvecoeur, from *Letters from an American Farmer* (595-609)
- 9/14 Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (657-65 and **BB**)
- 9/16 Phillis Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America" (752), "To the University of Cambridge, in New England" (755), "On the Death of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, 1770" (756), "Thoughts on the Works of Providence" (757), "To S.M., a Young African Painter, on Seeing His Works" (760), "To His Excellency General Washington" (761)

**American Literature, 1820-1865**

\*The following *Norton* texts to be found in Volume B.

Week Four

- 9/19 David Walker, *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (**BB**)
- 9/ 21 Maria Stewart, "An Address Delivered at the African Masonic Hall, Boston, February 27, 1833" (**BB**)
- 9/23 **Paper #1 Due**

Week Five

- 9/26 William Apess, "An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man" (1051-58)  
 Elias Boudinot, from the Cherokee *Phoenix* (1260-63)  
 Memorial of the Cherokee Council, November 5, 1829 (1263-68)

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9/28 Nathaniel Hawthorne, "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" (1276-88) and "The Minister's Black Veil" (1311-20)

9/30 Ralph Waldo Emerson, "American Scholar" (1138-51), "Self-Reliance" (1163-80), and "John Brown" (1211-13)

### Week Six

10/ 3 Emerson, "Experience" (1195-1210)

10/5 John L. O'Sullivan, "The Great Nation of Futurity" (**BB**)

10/7 Caroline Kirkland, from *A New Home—Who'll Follow?* (1069-78)

### Week Seven

10/10 Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government" (1857-71)

10/12 Thoreau, "Slavery in Massachusetts" (2046-56) and from "A Plea for Captain John Brown" (2056-60)

10/14 Sojourner Truth, "Speech to the Women's Right Convention in Akron, Ohio, 1851" (1695-96)  
Margaret Fuller, from *The Great Lawsuit: Man versus Men. Woman versus Women* (1640-59)

### Week Eight

10/17 Review for mid-term exam

10/19 **MID-TERM EXAM**

10/21 FALL BREAK

### Week Nine

10/24 Emily Dickinson, "Some keep the Sabbath going to Church" (2563), "I like a look of Agony" (2567), "I felt a Funeral, in my Brain" (2568), "After great pain, a formal feeling comes" (2572), "I heard a Fly buzz—when I died—" (2579), "Tell all the truth but tell it slant" (2590), "I'm 'wife'—I've finished that—" (2562), "I'm Nobody! Who are you?" (2564), "Publication—is the Auction" (2585), "I dwell in Possibility—" (2576)

10/26 Emily Dickinson, continued

10/28 Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1553-65) and "The Black Cat" (1593-98)

### Week Ten

10/31 Poe, "The Gold-Bug" (**BB**)

11/2 Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, "Eliza Harris" (2539-40)), "The Tennessee Hero" (2544-45), and "Bury Me in a Free Land" (2545-46)

11/4 **Paper #2 Due**

Week Eleven

- 11/7 Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (2064-84)  
11/ 9 Douglass, *Narrative* (2084-2097)  
11/11 Douglass, *Narrative* (2097-2129)

Week Twelve

- 11/14 Harriet Beecher Stowe, from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1701-32)  
11/16 Caroline Hentz, from *The Planter's Northern Bride* (**BB**)  
Anonymous, from a review of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (**BB**)  
11/18 Herman Melville, *Benito Cereno* (2405-27)

Week Thirteen

- 11/21 Melville, *Benito Cereno* (2428-61)  
11/23-27 Thanksgiving Break

Week Fourteen

- 11/28 Harriet Jacobs, from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1808-29)  
11/30 Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself" (2210-54)  
12/2 Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself" continued and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard  
Bloom'd" (2282-88)

Week Fifteen

- 12/5 Abraham Lincoln, "Address at the Dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery" (1635)  
and "Second Inaugural Address" (1635-36)  
12/ 7 **Paper #3 Due; Review for final**

**Final Exam:**

Monday, December 12 (11:00-1:00 p.m.)